**Bugs Don’t Bug Me, But Insects Interest Me**

Presenter: Walter Chadwick, Educator, HRAS  
**Date:** Wednesday ~ September 19, 2012 @ 7:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Lenoir Nature Center

Discover the fascinating world of insects with up close looks at some common and not so common species. Insects are the most diverse organisms on the planet. Are insects bugs? What is metamorphosis? Can we live with or without them?  
Join us for the answers to these questions and take a look at some fascinating creatures.

Refreshments served at 7:00 p.m. Program begins at 7:30 p.m.

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**Hawk Day is here! An Annual Family Program**

Date: Saturday – September 29, 2012  
Hawk Watch – 9 a.m. to 12 p.m  
Live Hawk Program – 1 p.m.  
**Location:** Lenoir Nature Preserve

Event is free and open to the public. The Hawk Watch will take place on the lawn overlooking the Hudson River. You can join us at any time, and our experts will help you to identify the birds that we see.

At 1:00 p.m., Jim Eyring, Master Falconer from Pace University, will present a live hawk program. There will be flight demonstrations, if weather conditions permit. Refreshments will be served.
Conservation Hot Topics

• For the endangered Peregrine falcon, a new Tappan Zee Bridge means new accommodations and special treatment during the construction process. In addition to construction costs, state officials must spend an estimated $8 million to preserve and protect endangered species while building a new Tappan Zee Bridge, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has outlined in a draft work permit and the final environmental impact statement.

Falcons have used a nesting box on the Tappan Zee Bridge for almost 20 years, and state officials said the new bridge must include another nesting box for the endangered species. Additionally, DEC officials said a construction buffer must take place around the old nesting box until the new box is ready to go so the falcons’ habitat is not disturbed (M. Shumberger, 2012).

• An Interfaith Blessing of the Trees is scheduled for Sunday, September 9, at 1:30 p.m. at the Rivertowns Square proposed development site. Construction for this development will cut down an estimated 313 trees with a combined age of 18,000 years. Sixty-six of these trees are more than two feet in diameter. An additional 5 acres of paved parking is planned which would increase flooding on the Saw Mill Parkway. To keep informed about this proposed 598,000 sq. ft. shopping mall alongside Saw Mill Parkway, contact Dobbs Ferry Mayor Hartley Connett at mayorconnett@dobbsferry.com — SANDRA WRIGHT

Volunteers Honored on Members’ Night

Every year the Hudson River Audubon Society recognizes volunteers who have gone above and beyond to make our chapter proud. Many thanks to the following volunteers:

• Saul Scheinbach was recognized for his years of service on the board and his term as president.
• Judi Veder was recognized for her years of service as the chapter’s Secretary.
• William Van Wart was recognized for discovering a rare Rufous Hummingbird on November 6 at Lenoir Nature Preserve.
• Ed Higgins was recognized for his dedication in keeping critical hummingbird feeders unfrozen for our guest from the west.
• Frank and Dana Fazzino were recognized for their tremendous work on our butterfly garden.
• Barbara Dexter was recognized for her dedication and her volunteer hours at the Lenoir Hawk Watch.

The chapter presented the 2012 Volunteer Appreciation awards at our Members’ Night on June 27, 2012. Each were given plaques and a small gift from the chapter. As with any organization, Hudson River Audubon depends on dedicated members like these to make our chapter thrive.
The past 15 years have seen an extraordinary evolution in our view of dinosaurs and their relationship to modern birds. Instead of slow, lumbering, cold-blooded reptiles, most scientists now believe that theropod dinosaurs were bipedal, fast-running, warm-blooded, non-flying ancestors of modern birds. Another way to say it is that birds can be thought of as flying dinosaurs.

This remarkable change has come about due, in part, to the unprecedented number of well-preserved fossils coming out of Liaoning Province in China. Many specimens are clearly feathered and even the feathers are well-preserved. In a recent study (hras.org/sw/swmay2012.htm) scientists found evidence that the feathers of *Microraptor*, a pigeon-sized, four-winged dinosaur were black and iridescent and probably used for sexual display.

Most of the non-avian dinosaurs* discovered so far have been small; even the most famous, *Archaeopteryx*, which lived 150 million years ago, was only 30 cm (1 ft.) long. But now a new discovery dwarfs all previously known examples. *Yutyrannus huali*—beautifully plumaged tyrant—lived about 125 million years ago, 60 million years before its distant descendent *Tyrannosaurus rex*. It was 10 meters (30 ft.) long and weighed 1,400 kg (3,000 lbs.), forty times larger than any previously known feathered dinosaur. Three fossilized skeletons, one adult and two juveniles, each covered in dense, well-preserved filamentous feathers, were found in the rich Liaoning fossil beds. They are described in the April 5, 2012 issue of *Nature*.

The report by a team of paleontologists headed by Xing Xu, Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology, Beijing, China, said the fossils provided the first “direct evidence for the presence of extensively feathered gigantic dinosaurs”, offering “new insights into early feather evolution.”

According to Xu, *Yutyrannus* dramatically increases the size range for which we have definite evidence of feathers. [It is] possible that feathers were much more widespread, at least among meat-eating dinosaurs, than most scientists would have guessed even a few years ago.” Many scientists believe that even *T. rex* may have had some type of plumage, at least over certain parts of its body. Xu said that, given the huge size of *Y. huali*, and that the feathers were more like the fuzzy down of a chick, they couldn't possibly have been used for flight and were most likely for insulation. The early Cretaceous when *Y. huali* lived is thought to have been colder than the later part of that period—average temperature of about 10°C (50°F) vs. 18°C (65°F). So the authors speculated that feathers in this case could represent an adaptation to an unusually cold environment. “The size, structure and extent of the feathers suggest that they would have formed a shaggy body covering that would have had at least some insulating function,” said team member Corwin Sullivan.

Was *Yutyrannus* covered in a dark plumage like *Microraptor* or some other hue? Xu said he had taken some feather samples for an analysis similar to that done with *Microraptor* in order to answer this question.

A fuzzy, meat-eating “chick” the size of a bus—could it have been yellow? — SAUL SCHEINBACH

*Non-avian dinosaurs are extinct ancestors of living birds. The latter are now considered “avian dinosaurs” by most paleontologists.*
HRAS Programs 2012–2013

Please make a note of these dates on your calendar. Don’t miss Hudson River Audubon’s wonderful selection of programs. All programs are free, open to the public, and take place at Lenoir Nature Center, unless specified.

Wednesday, September 19, 2012
BUGS DON’T BUG ME, BUT INSECTS INTEREST ME
Presenter: Walter Chadwick, Educator, HRAS

Saturday, September 29, 2012
FAMILY HAWK DAY
Hawk Watch – 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Live Hawk Program – 1 p.m.
(with Jim Eyring, Master Falconer)

Wednesday, October 24, 2012
ON THE BORDER, BY THE SEA:
WILDLIFE OF THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY OF TEXAS
Presenter: Michael Bochnik, President and Field Trip Leader, HRAS

Wednesday, November 14, 2012
GREAT GULL ISLAND TERNS ON THEIR BREEDING COLONY AND ON THEIR WINTERING GROUNDS
Presenter: Helen Hays, Chair, Great Gull Island Committee, American Museum of Natural History

Wednesday, January 23, 2013
YOU CAN USE THAT FOR THAT?
HISTORICAL AND MEDICINAL Lore OF PLANTS IN WESTCHESTER
Presenter: Mary Harrington, Master Gardener

Wednesday, February 27, 2013 (weather permitting)
FILM: “GREEN FIRE”
Aldo Leopold and an Epic for Our Time

Wednesday, March 27, 2013
CREATURES OF LIGHT:
NATURE’S BIOLUMINESCENCE
Presenter: Bernie Wides, Docent at the American Museum of Natural History

Wednesday, April 24, 2013
Program to be announced

Wednesday, May 29, 2013
THE BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS OF PREY
Presenters: Carol Butler and Peter Capainolo

Wednesday, June 26, 2013
MEMBERS’ NIGHT

— LYNN SHAW
Upcoming Field Trips

MICHAEL BOCHNIK

Outdoor activities such as birding and hiking with a group are a wonderful way to share your interests with like-minded people to learn more about nature, and to enjoy many preserves and natural areas.

Hudson River Audubon Society field trips are free and open to non-members. Bring binoculars and field guides if you have them. Some are available for loan for those who need them. Dress appropriately for the weather. For more information call Michael Bochnik at (914) 237-9331.

Directions for most trips can be found on our web site www.hras.org

- **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2012**
  **FALL MIGRATION WALK AT LENOIR PRESERVE**
  Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Lenoir Nature Center, 19 Dudley Street, Yonkers, NY.
  A leisurely walk around the preserve in search of Fall migrants and warblers. Late hummingbirds could be expected.

- **EVERY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY FROM SEPTEMBER 15 THROUGH OCTOBER, 2012**
  **LENOIR HAWK WATCH**
  Meet at 10:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. noon at the Great Meadow in front of Lenoir Mansion in Lenoir Nature Preserve.
  Hawk watchers from Hudson River Audubon will be on hand to spot and identify hawks migrating down the Hudson River corridor.

- **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2012**
  **BIRD WALK: MIGRATING SPARROWS**
  Meet at 8 a.m. at Lenoir Nature Preserve.
  It's the peak of the Fall sparrow migration and we'll see how many species are visiting the preserve on their way south. Other Fall migrants are expected as well.

Sign up for our email list for e-reminders of upcoming programs and field trips. Just go to hras.org, then click on the link in the home page.

You can also join us on Facebook. We have two pages you may like and subscribe to:

- Hudson River Audubon Society
- Beverly Smith Butterfly Garden

### HRAS FINANCIAL REPORT (7/1/2011–6/30/2012)

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Starting Funds (7/1/2011)       | $6,138.95    |
Net                              | $1,425.98    |
Funds (6/30/2012)                | $7,564.93    |
Join The Hudson River Audubon Society of Westchester!
Every membership supports Audubon's vital efforts to protect birds, other wildlife and natural habitats. Membership includes a subscription to Audubon magazine and affiliation with National Audubon. As a member, you will also receive our chapter newsletter, The Rivertown Naturalist, and an open invitation to all our guest lectures, field trips and events.

SIGN ME UP AS A NEW MEMBER.
ONE YEAR FOR $20.

Name

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone

CHAPTER # C9ZR200Z
Send check and this application to:
National Audubon Society
P.O. Box 422250
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250
Please make check payable to National Audubon Society.